

ABSTRACT

A method and apparatus for providing personalized information content over telephones is described. The creation of a voice portal is supported by the invention. Embodiments of the invention use telephone identifying information such as the calling party's number to identify, or create, user profiles for customization. The personalized content is specific to that user based on her/his telephone identifying information and may be further customized based on the current time, current date, the calling party's locales, and/or the calling party's dialect and speech patterns. Also, the telephone identifying information may support targeted advertising, content, and purchasing recommendations specific to that user. The system may use a voice password and/or touch-tone login system when appropriate to distinguish the caller or verify the caller's identity for specific activities. Typically, embodiments of the invention will immediately present a caller personalized content based on her/his profile using the appropriate dialect as well as the caller's preferred content. Profiles can be constructed as the caller uses embodiments of the invention as well as through explicit designation of preferences. For example, as the user selects topics, as well as particular content, a record of actions can be maintained. This record of actions can be used to provide suggestions and direct the personalization of the system for the user.